CDXC Newsletter

May 1992 **Chiltern DX Club** **Issue 78**

Editorial (G0HSD)

Hello everyone. Firstly apologies for the delay in the appearance of this newsletter. I have been very busy over the last few months as has the rest of the Committee. I have barely touched the rig in months.

I was very happy to be able to attend the buffet held at The Chequers at Brize Norton for the South Sandwich team. Many thanks to Bren, G4DYO for all his efforts.

We were very glad to be able to host Mas, JE3MAS, one of the operators on both legs of the journey. He was welcomed at Heathrow by Bren and myself and whisked by fast car to Bledlow where he barely had time to dust himself down before my sister's eighteenth birthday party started. He immediately found a friend, an old lady who had once decoded CW in the war and also drank real ale in pints. After much hilarity Mas finally gave in at 2.30am after a vineyard of wine. This puzzled one of the other guests, a doctor, who had been taught at medical college the Japanese people had great problems taking alcohol. She decided Mas was an exception to the rule.

We saw the ops off in great style at Brize Norton and the whole family followed their progress with interest.

The highlight was working Mas on 40m CW (Yes it was him on 7001 !!).

On their return I and several others welcomed them back (after spending some considerable time trying to tell the security guard what the hell we were doing.) at the airbase. There then followed another high speed drive to Bledlow (I apologise to those following me that nearly hit that BMW when I pulled off the A40). After a quick coffee we descended on The Lions. We sat, ate and drank until Martti announced he needed a hair cut as he was flying to Dayton soon after arriving in Finland. After the hairdressers we hit the motorway again only to hit the bank holiday traffic. We got to the airport just in time for Martti to get on. The last I saw was this huge hulk of a man sprinting into terminal one with a small JA following with his bags. I saw neither of them again for 20 minutes. Then Mas appeared

accompanied by Martti's bags. Martti got the plane, the bags didn't.

We got back in the car and arrived back home just in time to have dinner with the family and John G3WGV. Then it was my birthday party!!! The rest is a little hazy. However part way through the proceedings Mas presented me with something very special. The very CW key he had worked me on 40M with. It now has pride and place in the shack next to the lump of rock Martti gave me. Truly treasured possessions.

I think most of us were very happy with the operation. I worked them on 40, 15 and 10m CW and 15m phone. Considering the appalling WX conditions and the fact that only 3 of the operators had ever been on an expedition before it was a remarkable op.

I was also glad to get Clipperton put away. Well done Vincent for making a lot of people very happy. I worked Clipperton on 80 - 10m SSB. Great stuff!

That and the S2 and A5 that have appeared now put me on 308 worked far higher than I would have dreamt a year ago. Congratulation to all those who have now finished DXCC with all these operations.

Well that's it from here. Please please please send in whatever you have for the newsletter. I know this was a bit rushed but by the time of the next deadline all my exams will be out of the way and I should have plenty of time again.

Good DX to one and all.

73s de Andrew

Deadline for next issue 5th July

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CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Having just returned from Dayton I am drawn once again to the contrast between the enthusiasm of amateur radio operators in the US and UK. Why is it that Oxford or Daventry are regarded by many G's as impossibly remote venues, to be visited for at best half a day, whilst Dayton and Visalia attract over a thousand DXers who travel hundreds of miles and stay for a long weekend? It is certainly not the programme; to my mind the RSGB HF Convention has offered at least as good a set of talks and slide-shows over the last few years and will certainly do so again this year. Are we just less committed to our hobby than our stateside friends? Let's try this year to show that we are not and make the 1992 HF and IOTA Convention the biggest ever. Perhaps if every CDXC member brings along two or three friends from their local club?..

A major discussion point at Dayton this year was "ethical DXing" and all its various sub-issues:

- Should DXpeditions use wide splits and annihilate many non-DX QSOs?

- Should DXpeditions leave in-country amateur radio in a better state than they found it?

- Where should the barriers be drawn on payments for QSL cards and sponsored visits to collect or deliver QSLs?

- And, perhaps most seriously, what position should the DX world take over operations from disputed territories during civil war or terrorist activity.

Examples of the latter abound, from C1A in Bougainville through most of the XU and XZ operations, and S0RASD, to YU. The danger is of bureaucrats mentally linking amateur radio to guerrilla armies; and imposing a permanent ban. Should the DX world stay out of these situations for the greater good of amateur radio? Or should amateur radio skills be used to publicise a cause and strengthen guerrilla communications? Does the short term payoff from immediate involvement exceed the long term benefit of international friendship deriving from a universally acceptable amateur service?

Not a subject for 20 metres! But what do you think?

There have been no entries for my Tom Neale quiz of the last issue so the bottle of champagne is safe and will be offered in another quiz, if I don't drink it first. In case anyone is interested, Tom was a New Zealander who lived alone on Suwarrow between 1952 and 1954, and again between 1960 and 1963. He described the experience in the book "An Island to Oneself" published in the mid '60s. Old age forced him to retire to Rarotonga where he died a few years ago.

VP8SSI - UK OPERATIONS

Although it had been known for some time that a large US group was planning to activate South Sandwich there was not the inkling of an idea that they would pass through the UK en-route for this rare, and much sought-after DX location. However, a chance QSO between Tony Woolford, G3SNN and Ralph Fedor, K0IR last November revealed that the team was booked to fly by Her Majesty's Flying Club from Brize Norton to Mount Pleasant by way of Ascension Island in March. Now Brize Norton is a considerable distance from civilisation, let alone any UK civil airport, and the base is not blessed with public transport links so it was immediately obvious that assistance might be needed - and who better to provide it than the UK's leading DX Group?

Correspondence was immediately established with Al Hernandez, WA3YVN, transport coordinator for the DXpedition, and help with transport and accommodation was offered. This was immediately taken up by a grateful Al. Requests for assistance on the PacketCluster system and also in DX News Sheet produced immediate offers of help from the usual keen stalwarts - both with transportation and accommodation.

Plainly the visitation to the UK by a group of top international DXers could not go amiss and many people said they wanted to meet the Team. The idea of a social gathering prior to departure was mulled over and put to Al. He agreed with the idea and suggested it would be good to have it fairly close to the Brize Norton air base so that team members would know where to head for in an emergency (not sure if he meant before or after they had sampled the English beer!). G4DYO and his XYL Ruth went on a pub crawl - sorry, reconnaissance expedition - and located an excellent hostelry right opposite the air base, the Landlord of which promised us virtual freedom of the premises from mid-afternoon.

The team members were due to arrive at various times on different days - possibly at different civil airports - so the offers of transportation and accommodation were quickly taken up by the CDXC coordinator. Mas, JE3MAS arrived on 7th March and was met by G0HSD and G4DYO at Heathrow. He stayed over the weekend with G0HSD. Andrew's sister celebrated her 18th birthday with a big party on the evening of his arrival so Mas received a somewhat unexpected welcome! The 8th March dawned - Dick G0MFO, Tony G3SNN, John G3VPW, Bren G4DYO and XYL Ruth waited in Terminal 3 at Heathrow at some ungodly hour for Ralph K0IR, Al WA3YVN, Tony WA4JQS and John W7KNT

while Derek G4BLX and XYL Val G4MCD waited in Terminal 4 for David KJ9I. All except WA3YVN arrived OK - first fright, where was Al, the transport coordinator for the DXpedition?? It transpired that he had missed the international flight as a result of a delayed internal flight in the USA and he arrived an hour or so later to be met by G4DYO. KJ9I's arrival in T4 was announced by a strangled cry of "we got 'im" on the 2m link from Derek as he and Val departed with David for a sight-seeing tour of London! Apparently it's quite easy to drive around Tower Bridge at 6.30 on a Sunday morning, although sane people may not wish to know that!

Monday 9th - the Big Day. G4DYO met Martti Laine at Heathrow from Helsinki during the morning and The Main Man was entertained by Bren & Ruth for a few hours; perhaps that should read the other way, Bren being so completely gob-smacked by having his Hero in his house that Martti must have wondered what he'd come to! One fright - whilst shaking his head in disbelief at the DYO antenna "farm" Martti's spectacles fell apart (Bren claimed it was caused by the powerful RF field in the vicinity), necessitating a swift drive to a nearby opticians for high-speed repair. Martti, Bren & Ruth later joined John G3WGV, Andrew G0HSD, David G3OUF, Miklo YT7MM and Mas JE3MAS for a pub lunch in Finchampstead.. Later that evening the whole team plus the "helpers" and a number of other well-known UK DXers descended on The Chequers Inn, Brize Norton for an informal buffet prior to departure. DXers came from afar to wish the team well, including Bill, G4ADD and Eric, G0KJW from "up north" and Denny, GW3CDP from the "Land of the Leeks". Even Bill, KL7TC came along - although he was staying temporarily just up the road at Upper Heyford! For some of the Team members this was the first time they had met.... Nervous grins soon turned to laughter and following a FB buffet, a compulsory photo-call in front of the VP8SSI and CDXC Banners, good luck wishes from the assembled Deserving and the presentation of a Union Flag and CDXC cash contribution to the team by Martin Atherton, the Team members were transported the short distance to Brize Norton for the inevitable military-style security arrangements prior to check-in at the terminal. Unfortunately the flight, which was originally scheduled for departure at 11.45pm was delayed until 1.45am, but eventually they got away....

What happened between then and 16th April will be the subject of many magazine articles, videos, slide-shows and DX Convention presentations. Enough to say that the gang pulled off one of the most spectacular DXpeditions of

all time... and some of their stories will make your hair stand on end.

Courtesy once again of HMFC, the exhausted Team landed back in the UK on 16th April at 8am - a time which came as some surprise to those who enjoy a lay-in! Roger Brown's drive to Brize Norton in 1.5 hours would have been impossible in a Formula 1 car, let alone a family saloon and he'll shortly be nominated for the Nigel Mansell prize for endeavour by the Thames Valley Police! The short stopover presented an opportunity for a further - this time impromptu - gathering at a pub near G0HSD's home with G3SXW, G3VIE and G3XJS joining several of the team members and those accommodating them for a few pints of nectar. G4DYO went hot-foot to Gatwick - not quite at LQP velocity - with KJ9I, who wanted to catch an early afternoon Virgin flight to Boston. Derek & Val, G4BLX/MCD joined that send-off. Martti Laine flew out to Finland the same evening, following an emergency haircut hastily arranged by G0HSD but minus his baggage! The remaining US team members departed from Heathrow the following day but Mas, JE3MAS - who, incidentally, made more QSOs from the island than anyone else and appeared not to need sleep - stayed a further two days with Andrew before leaving for Japan.

Finally, two CDXC members assisted with drafting the scripts for the QSL cards for South Sandwich, South Georgia and Falkland Islands.

There is no doubt that the assistance we were able to offer was greatly appreciated by the team, all of whom said that a great burden had been lifted from their shoulders by the help with accommodation and transportation during their UK stopovers.

Very special thanks go to Andrew G0HSD, Dick G0MFO, Roger G3LQP, Tony G3SNN, John G3VPW and Derek G4BLX for accommodating the Team members and without whom life could have been somewhat difficult. Also to those who gave generously to help with the cost of the buffet. They flew the flag for G and the Chiltern DX Club came up trumps!

"The condemned man ate a hearty breakfast"! (Val, G4MCD)

Having been part of the SSI expedition welcoming committee and have followed the expedition with great interest listening to the hardships and deprivations, I sit in my warm cozy shack feeling thankful that I was at least able to send David KJ9I off to South Sandwich full of, I hope, typical British hospitality. His first trip to England, arrive Heathrow 0730 Sunday morning, what better time for a whistle stop tour of London?

Home to Sussex, he's tired, welcome to the shack, much approval, a cup of coffee, go to bed you can play later. Two hours of very refreshing sleep and an introduction to a traditional Sunday lunch (the condemned man etc...). Sunday afternoon, what better way to entertain a visitor than a trip to Brighton, the Pier, the Pavilion, the Marina, the Lanes, the Rock... yes we did send out 6 sticks of Brighton rock to the Islands! Home, to tea (the condemned man again..). A couple of hours to play, for David to hear so many different Russian prefixes was quite a novelty as a chirpy UB5 appealed to him. It is amazing that what is common to one, is rare to another. Sunday evening - pub, walking the dog of course! We were delighted to see John G3AEZ who had driven down from Dorking to join us, we didn't do very well in the pub quiz.

I went to work next morning leaving David to sleep, Derek (G4BLX) my OM cooked the lunch (the condemned man!). His final trip was to the dead centre of Sussex - Chailey Windmill, I work close by. At last, we left for Brize Norton meeting many members of CDXC and at last the other members of the team. Thank you Brendan for laying on such a lovely supper - at the thought of no food on the plane **THE CONDEMNED MEN ATE HEARTY!!!**

(We also introduced David to Thomas the Tank but that is another story!)

From Bill, G4ADD

Hi Fellows,

Operators who go on DXpeditions must be either dedicated or mad to spend 3 1/2 years in the planning and arranging and then spend thousands of $ of your own money to go to such a remote God Forsaken hole as Thule to get violently sea sick during the journey and get thrown in the Antarctic Ocean several times, whilst landing. Then find the "place" covered in Guano and a welcoming committee of stinking Penguins and unfriendly fur Seals. Carry 500+ galls of fuel, along with all the other stores required for a 2 week stay. Struggle for 2 days erecting antennae and arranging operating camps as you slither and slide through the Guano. "Live" amongst that for 2 weeks in zero temperatures with limited accommodation and no washing facilities!!

Imagine then, you switch on the rig to "work the needy", in 50mph winds when it is so cold you can barely hold a pencil, to hear the abuse "the son of a bitch has spent 3 mins less on 4's than he did on 3's " etc etc. Dedicated YES! Mad I suppose they need to be.

Thanks guy's I made it, have a safe journey home. By-the-way where do you go next.....????

73 de Bill G4ADD

RAMBLINGS OF A DX EDITOR
Brendan McCartney, G4DYO

"We do not want to be the first major DXpedition involved with net operations or lists"
- VP8SSI Operator Handbook, compiled by Martti Laine and other top-notch DXers

Ah! What joy to True-Blue DXers... At least one of the regular European net controllers (sic) was telling all and sundry that the South Sandwich DXpedition would be on his net. Of course he was wrong. The tragedy is that many "new" DXers come into this game believing that they must get on the ridiculous lists or they won't work the DX. The other excuse of "I have to use lists as I only have 100 watts and a dipole" is rubbish when one considers the achievements of QRP operators in working the big DXpeditions using just a few watts. Life may be too short for QRP but some of those guys could teach the list/net brigade a few things...

The last month or so has been dominated by DXpeditions to two very rare islands - Clipperton and South Sandwich. The Clipperton operation produced many complaints about slow-operating but, when the figures were published the group proved to have made more QSOs from the island than any previous DXpedition. S-l-o-w operating maybe be frustrating to some but I must record one very important fact in their favour - most of the operators were extremely careful to ensure that callsigns were copied correctly. I had five QSOs - three on SSB and two on CW - and on each occasion my callsign was given twice, leaving me in absolutely no doubt that I had made the contact and thereby eliminating any necessity for an insurance contact. I don't recall any major operation being quite so careful. Slow they may have been; accurate they most certainly were. Tnx guys for five excellent contacts.

The South Sandwich operation had been planned for several years and even up to the eleventh hour there was still the possibility of cancellation. The story of the UK involvement is told elsewhere; suffice to say that the G's really got their names on the map this time!! On numerous occasions there were long periods when only G's were worked, largely as a token of thanks from the team for assistance rendered.

The trip to Thule Island from the Falklands aboard the ABEL-J was very rough and at least two operators were so ill that consideration was given to dropping them off at South Georgia. Fortunately they recovered enough to play a very active part in the

ensuing proceedings. Conditions on South Sandwich were quite dreadful with almost continuous strong, biting winds, low temperatures, rain, snow, etc, etc. Captain Cook described it as "The worst place on earth", a view echoed by Martti Laine on more than one occasion during the pile-ups. It took several days to unload the gear and once the stations had been set up it was impossible to keep antennas erect; LF antennas erected during the day would be blown down that night. Tents were blown down several times in torrential rainstorms. The wind was so strong at times that it was impossible to read incoming signals. The temperature dropped so low that operators reported "difficulty in turning the VFO knob" and "hands so cold I can't write". CW ops had heat-lamps directly over their keying fists to keep them working! Meanwhile, of course, we all sat back in our cosy shacks enjoying the fun. Hi! They were worked in the UK on all bands except 160m, although very few made it on 80m. Best bands were 10 and 15m with S9++ signals coming in hour after hour and over 39,000 QSOs were made. When the ABEL-J returned from its trip to South Georgia the weather conditions were so bad that, to ensure the safety of the members of the team during departure operations, some of the DXpedition equipment was abandoned on the island.

Despite their gruelling experience on Thule, the team decided to stop off for a two-day operation from South Georgia. Again seasickness caused problems but those effected had recovered by the time South Georgia was reached. Using equipment which had been left aboard for just such an opportunity, they made some 5,200 QSOs signing VP8CBA - the vast majority on CW. To round off their VP8 activity they spent two days airing various callsigns from the Falkland Islands whilst waiting for the flight back to the UK and home.

It goes without saying that anyone who missed this outstanding DX performance may have to wait a very, very long time for the next show. **A brilliant DX operation carried out under extreme conditions.**

DXpeditions to places which have not been activated for some years inevitably provide a lucky few of the Deserving with the last one for Honor Roll or, in some cases, the last Current DXCC Country and a few more G's wrapped up their DXCC with VP8SSI. For some, the fruits of a lifetime's labour; for others, the result of being in the right place at the right time! As a result of either FO0CI or VP8SSI DX News Sheet Worked The World certificates have recently been issued to: G3NOF, G3RTE, G3RUV, G3SNN, G4ADD, G4BWP, G4GED, G4GIR and GW4BLE. Many congratulations

to them all.

Kermadec came and went in the spin of a VFO with just a few lucky people having prior knowledge (not me!) of the operation. Whether ZL4DO will have an opportunity to visit the island again in the future is not known and with Ron Wright announcing cancellation of his planned trip due to lack of success in raising funds ZL8 could slowly climb the Most Countries List during the coming years. Kermadec has always been difficult, especially for Europe and precisely why Ron chose not to seek European assistance in raising funds is not known. With Kermadec likely to appear at No.4 position in the next Most Wanted Country survey for Europe it is unthinkable that there would have been no response.

Whilst on the subject of Most Wanted Countries surveys, the removal of countries recently activated from the last survey published by The DX Magazine produces the following for Europe:

1. FT-Z Amsterdam Island
2. 3Y Peter 1st Island
3. KH1 Baker, Howland
4. ZL8 Kermadec Islands
5. KH5K Kingman Reef
6. VK0 Macquarie Island
7. A5 Bhutan
8. VU4 Andaman Islands
9. VK9 Mellish Reef
10. ZL9 Auckland/Campbell Is

Quite a bit different from, say, 12 months ago?

Ghana (which will be up around 25 in the next survey) has been in the news, with rumours of forthcoming activity by PA3CXC. One Packet Bulletin stated that Jim Smith was involved - this news came as some surprise to Jim when I spoke with him as he needs 9G for his very last CW country, but did not know anything about imminent activity. However, some DXpeditioners are paranoid about revealing their plans so keep your ears open. At a recent WARC Meeting in Torremolinos the representative from Ghana said he held a 9G callsign and he was reported as saying that amateur radio may well be authorised again in Ghana within the next 12 months.....we shall see.

The Bangladesh situation gets curioser and curioser! Having apparently issued - for a suitable sum of money - the first two callsigns (not licences) to nationals, the government then gave first operating authority to foreigners providing they used just their home callsigns "as there is no licensing legislation in place". The HA5BUS Team first appeared on 1st April (after midday!) and it was expected that 9K2CS and WZ6C would also be active under similar authority, but it was later reported that only HA5BUS had received amateur radio operating permission.. The Hungarians included an appropriate identifier in their callsign, presumably by

their own choice, and were very QRV on the "usual" HF bands for several weeks - there were no reports of WARC band activity. Jim and Kirsti Smith were offered similar authority during their visit to Bangladesh a few months ago but they declined because it was a situation they had never encountered previously and they were not sure how their own licensing authority would react. When it became obvious that the Bangladesh Government was about to authorise the HA operation Jim wrote to his licensing authority in Australia and, somewhat surprisingly, received the reply that they had no objection to him signing VK9NS from Bangladesh but would appreciate him announcing his location from time to time during transmissions. What the IARU - and for that matter the ITU - think about the matter is not known. The bottom line is that very few countries can effectively police the amateur bands so objections would have little effect on those who wished disregard International Law anyway. One also wonders how Saif, S21A and Nazim, S21B view the situation?

On the subject of the HA5BUS Team, their recent operation from Iran was the first from that country to gain DXCC approval for some time. When questioned about the decision Chuck Hutchinson, K8CH, at ARRL HQ said: *"I have authoritative information in the files from 1988 stating that Iran was not allowing amateur radio because of their war with Iraq. EP/HA5BUS is the only documented evidence we've seen allowing amateur radio operation from Iran since then. I am seeking further information with regards to Iranian nationals."*

Turning to more mundane matters, Don Search left the ARRL in early March after some 15+ years service with the DXCC Desk. There were a thousand rumours about the reason for his departure and, as far as I know, the League has issued no statement giving the true reason so I shall not speculate. Don was always very helpful and a mine of information on DXCC matters and I shall miss him. His job has been advertised with a salary of around $25k - let's hope somebody equally dedicated fills the position. The success of DXCC depends on stability in the administration and, according to US sources, there is a lot of work to be done on the programme. The DXAC is again looking at the use of electronic mail, the status of 4U1VIC, Tatar Republic, the Future of DXing and DXCC, etc, etc. There is also a request in hand for the Spratly Islands and Southern Sudan to be deleted. Good luck to the staff at ARRL in their endeavours for the world's leading amateur radio award programme.

Lastly, as this piece was being finalised, word came through that Father Marshall Moran,

9N1MM had died in New Delhi aged 86 years. Father Moran - "9N1 Mickey Mouse" - operated amateur radio from Nepal for 40 years, making some 300,000 contacts and assisting many visiting hams to obtain permission to operate. He helped found SEANET and had regular contacts with JY1 and also with EA0JC - Spain's King Carlos, who had been inspired by Moran to obtain his amateur licence. While not on the air, Father Moran ran St Xavier's school in Kathmandu and worked tirelessly to improve the education and well-being of the Nepalese people. In December, 1984 Father Moran was guest of honour at an excellent CDXC gathering at the QTH of Don Beattie, G3OZF when he was presented with a CDXC Merit Award No.13 by Roger Balister, G3KMA. He will be sadly missed by his many amateur friends world-wide.

Keep chasing the DX - there's plenty of it. See you in the P5 pile-ups.

Forthcoming G operation from Sri Lanka (tnx G3XTT)

Four radio amateurs from the Whitton Amateur Radio Group will be operating from Sri Lanka for a period of three weeks starting 12th June. Operation will be on all bands from 3.5 to 50MHz. At present all four operators have been issued with individual 4S7 callsigns. An application has also been made for a group call 4S0UK. This will probably be issued on arrival in Sri Lanka. A considerable amount of equipment is already en route for Sri Lanka by ship. The use of beam antennas and amplifiers should produce some good signals. The four operators are:

David Bowman	G0MRF	(4S7DBG) ex G8PDW
Doug Goodison	G0LUH	(4S7DGG)
Paul Nicholls	G0ONA	(4S7PNG)
Jan Vassek	G0OHW	(4S7JVG)

In addition to Sri Lanka, two of the operators will be active from the Maldives for a few days towards the end of the three week period. The QSL route will be G8PDW. All cards will be sent out following the return of the group. The address for G8PDW is OK in all international callbooks from the early 80's -

D.Bowman, 31 Benson Close, Hounslow, Middx TW3 3QX

CDXC Contesting (Paul Evans, G4BKI)

Bigger & bigger scores.....

It's very interesting to see the remarkable increase in scores in the big contests that has taken place over the last few years. Compare like with like, at the same point of the sunspot cycle, and you'll see some scores have doubled in a remarkably short time. It begs the question, why?

Some would say it is the inception of the PC into the shack. I'm afraid I, and many others I know, would counter that & say that the PC as a real time logging tool often slows operators down. It takes a good, alert, experienced operator to run high rates with a PC as a logging companion. In multi-single & multi-multi set ups it is very difficult indeed to ensure that all your operators are capable of using the machine at all, never mind getting it to enhance your rates! The chief advantages, of course, are the reduction of all the paperwork chores after the contest & the reduction of real-time dupes (although 50% of thoseare arguably best worked out of the way in high rate operating anyway). More of this later.

Other subtleties such as CW produced by the PC are unlikely to feature too in these major score improvements, because very good memory keyers were available back then too. We have previously touched on fast band changing & I feel it also is a minor factor (in CQ WW CW we changed bands a mere 19 times in 48 hours).

At the end of the day there have to be some other very good reasons:

(i) No tune-up transceivers. Sometimes rig tuning used to become a real struggle & often for no apparent reason, maybe a case of too much haste, not enough speed!

(ii) Improved receivers. Compare the modern passband tuning, wide dynamic range receiver to the flagship rig of 10 years ago. It becomes a major bore to operate an old transceiver in contests these days. With higher numbers of bits around the corner in DDS systems, the low phase noise, no spur transceiver of the future with digital signal processing too will make things far better (and I don't mean the kiddy toy DSP that's fitted to Amateur gear right now).

(iii) Higher gain, optimised yagis. Computers are really making an impact in antenna designs. More gain & better front-to-back on shorter booms is enabling many home stations to trade up their old yagis and get better performance for the same size antenna. Monoband antenna design is also improving, the K8CC being an excellent example.

(iv) Operating skills have improved in leaps & bounds. These days around one contact in ten may hold your rate back from its ultimate level, only a short time ago it might have been one in five, or worse. I'm afraid I often cite the other man's operating as the limit to rate, not necessarily the absolute ability at your end.

Sad to say, but one reason for this improvement may be that the majority of contesters are ten years older than they used to be and such little young blood is entering the field that is why the operating is better! I'd prefer to believe that the best have got better and the newcomers are following their example, I certainly hope so for the future of contesting!

(v) Finally, the PC does have to take credit for enhancing the increased number of country multipliers that are spotted these days. Whereas in the past a multiplier station had to be very efficiently organised to avoid missing required multipliers, these days it is a simple matter to spot the wanted ones and pounce. It is very difficult to increase the rate by a significant factor, but to get the multipliers *and* the high rate always puts your score well near the top. Some of the country multiplier targets that have to be met to achieve a big score these days, on a band-to-band basis, are quite unbelievable.

In view of that last comment, it is interesting to see the different styles of operating required between an RSGB non-multiplier contest & the big multiplier based ones. Rate is everything in AFS (look at the top ten stations in the results and you'll find that behind the calls are the top ten rate operators in the country for sure), in multiplier contests you need a rate operator on the run station, but you need a real DXer on the multiplier station to wheedle them out. As a final observation this time, it is very thought provoking that during a multi-single multiplier contest the perceived importance of run to multiplier station shifts around several times, especially on the second day. Towards the end (the last two hours) the run station seems to take importance as the hit rate of new multipliers sinks, maybe because they've all been worked. Just before that multipliers can often pile in at a tremendous rate. Maybe it's the bands we have to finish on at that time of day. Whatever it is, contesting is certainly a funny old game.

Good Luck & good operating.

CONTEST NEWS - G0HSD

CQ WPX SSB 1992

Steve, P29DX, entered this years CQ WPX SSB contest as a 10m single operator. He made 2600 QSOs and 5.2 Million points during the contest. This amazing score is even more incredible when you hear that the PA of his TS930 blew up shortly after 1100z on the Sunday and that later that day he came down with a very dangerous form of malaria. Steve is now fit and well and chuffed at having smashed the old Oceania 10m record to pieces.

CQ WPX SSB 1991

Congratulations to Steve, GW4BLE who came 12th in the world in last years WPX and , I think either 4th or 6th in Europe. Very well done Steve. Congratulations to Keith, GW0ARK for another tremendous result also.

CQ WPX CW 1991

CDXC members also did very well in the CW leg of WPX last year. GW8GT (ops including G4BKI) came 9th in the world in the multi-single category with 5.9 million points. They also came 5th in Europe, while GB5AA (ops inc. G3OUF) came 8th in Europe with 4.4 million, GB0WPX (ops inc. G0MFO) came 15th and G4BUO 18TH.

In the single operator all band section GB6MX (G3MXJ) was top G with just over a million points, followed by GX0AAA (G3SXW) and several other CDXC members following hot on the trail.

GB8FX (G3FXB) made 2.3 million points in his 20m single band entry and GB0DX (G4BUE) made just over half a million on 15m. Very well done to all!.

IARU RADIOSPORT 1992

CDXC have managed to secure the permission of the RSGB HF Contests Committee to represent the RSGB in IARU Radiosport held on the weekend of 11th and 12th of July. We have secured a number of callsigns with the intention of being continually active on all bands throughout the duration of the contest (24hrs).

We have not yet decided how to split the bands between stations, but if you are interested in operating with a GB call on behalf of the RSGB in this contest please let me know. The contest is SSB and CW and

therefore we are looking for people to operate on either or both modes. If you are willing to support a multi operator entry please let me know, as there may be members who are not experienced contesters that might like a go as well as the hardened pro!

The following callsigns will be used:
GB4HQ, GB5HQ, GB6HQ, GB8GB and GB0GB

RSGB NATIONAL FIELD DAY 6th & 7th June

CDXC will once again be entering NFD from Bledlow, Nr. Aylesbury in Bucks. Don, G3OZF has collected a crack team for this year in an effort to do even better than last year, in the restricted section. If you are an experienced contest (CW) operator without commitments this Field Day please drop Don a line QTHR or via the PacketCluster network. Best of luck!!

RESULTS OF THE FIRST CDXC DX DAY

The first CDXC DX DAY competition was held on 22 December 1991 and 4 January 1992. For those of you who are not sure of the competition it is a contest for DX chasers, spread over two dates but covering on full 24 time period in all, where DXers had to work as many different countries as possible *without* calling CQ, using the cluster or joining lists.

There were only a few entrants this year which is to be expected for a first time, but many thanks to those people for making the effort in what proved to be harder competition than first thought.
The results are as follows:

Overall table:

Pl	Call	160	80	40	20	15	10	QSOs	Total Score
1st	G3SXW	21	81	48	63	24	18	85	255
2nd	G0CCH	--	48	39	36	30	24	59	177
3rd	G0GRK	--	9	3	6	18	--	12	36

It is hardly worth splitting the entrants into the various sections other than saying that G3SXW and G0CCH were CW only and G0GRK was SSB only.

The following comments were received.

From G3SXW: Like the idea. The boring bit was rubber stamping loads of Europeans (and waiting for them to make their interminable goodbyes to each other!). Maybe in the future make it only non-European QSOs. To keep the flow going a bit allow each country on every band - and why not WARC ? This is not a contest and anything to improve activity is still welcome there. Suggest all nine bands, and DX country workable on any band. Nice and Simple.

From G0CCH: If I had my way you would be hung, drawn and quartered for proposing such a "contest". Joking apart, it was one of the hardest events I've ever entered, not to say the most frustrating. For the first event I was very badly prepared and kept nodding off during the small hours. For the second event I had a S9 noise problem for most of the day, so could have done better. (that's my story and I'm going to stick to it.) Having to ragchew for 15 or 25 mins. at a time just to get another 3 points was a bit much though, especially as I got lost for things to say to someone I didn't know. Also how many times can you say "Conditions here" etc. before you go out of your tiny mind?
Anyhow, I really did enjoy myself and I look forward to the next one.

Gotaways include: A61AC, VK3BM, HK4CYR, V51??.

Thanks for a real goodie.

All points noted and the Committee have decided to run the event again this year. It will be for the new Committee to pick up on any of the points and change the rules as necessary.
Many thanks for those who supported the event and I sincerely hope it will be the first of many, with increased activity from year to year.

PENALLT TROPHY

After a great winter on the low bands, with the worlds rarest countries hammering 40 and 80 metres very hard, why not look through your logs and see if you are able to put in and entry for the Penallt Trophy ?

The full rules were published in the September 91 issue of the Newsletter but a summary of them is as follows:

The idea is to work at least a total of 100 countries on 40 and 80 metres between 1st October 1991 and 31st March 1992, ON ANY FIVE DAYS OF YOUR CHOICE, INCLUDING CONTESTS. The same country can be worked once on each band for credit. Please send your log excerpts to any of the new Committee members by 31 July 1992.

VISALIA DX CONVENTION (Don Field, G3XTT)

My only previous visit to the Visalia Convention had been 10 years ago, in 1982, so I was delighted to be able to schedule a return visit as part of a family holiday in California. There were many more overseas visitors than I remember from my previous trip, including OH1VR, SM5CAK (his trip a 50th birthday present from his family), DK2WV, OH6DO, F6HIZ, DL2BCD, OH1RY, DL2HQH, LA4LN (heading for home after his Pacific DXpedition), OH2BGD, DJ2PS, DJ0VT, KL7AF (of Kodiak Island fame), 9V1YC, DK2PS and ZL3GQ. The UK contingent comprised G3TXF, G3SXW, G4HTD and myself. I suppose total attendance must have been around the 1,000 mark, with about 650 sitting down to the Saturday evening dinner.

The Convention proceedings opened with the reading out by W6PQS of an AMTOR message received from Tony, WA4JQS, on the Abel-J out of South Georgia. This was to the effect that, during their time on South Georgia, the VP8SSI team had discovered some old records relating to a Norwegian explorer who, some 100 years or so back, had sailed out of South Georgia never to be seen again. However, it turned out that he had been shipwrecked on an uncharted island some hundreds of miles to the south. Although his body was never discovered, he had wrapped himself in a Norwegian flag for warmth, and the flag had survived. Considered opinion was that the survival of the flag effectively implied Norwegian sovereignity over the island. Marrti Laine believed this sufficient justification for DXCC status, and had ordered the ship to head south at full steam. An operation of just a few hours was anticipated, probably over the weekend of 11/12th April, signing 3Y0BH/P. From then on there were some very uncomfortable DXers in the Visalia audience. Was this a spoof, or should they rush home to their shacks just in case?!

Each of the three major suppliers had a hospitality room, and there was a further large room where various smaller suppliers, magazines and clubs had table. In fact, the whole event is very much along the lines of the RSGB HF Convention, being treated much more as a social occasion than a trade show. Nevertheless, the pool-side cocktail parties went down well enough, hosted by the DX Bulletin (Friday evening) and Henry Radio (Saturday evening).

I found it quite impossible to attend all the events, but CDXC members may well be interested in what I considered to be some of the highlights. Dave Sumner, K1ZZ, of the ARRL opened with a keynote speech calling for what he described as "Socially responsible DXing". For example, this

would mean DXpeditions leaving amateur radio in a DX country in a better position than when they had arrived. He cited several recent examples where this had been the case. He commented that the FCC was likely to take an increasingly tough line with bad operators, and clubs had a responsibility to keep their members on the straight and narrow. Dave's belief was that we will increasingly be able to use advances in technology to remove the "cloak of anonymity", and that this will drive away many of the problems which we currently encounter.

The DX Panel (N7NG K8CH W6CF VP2ML W6OAT and W1YL/4) took a number of topics, mainly relating to the future of DXCC. W6OAT suggested the idea of "counters" rather than "countries", possibly to include US states, Canadian provinces, and other recognisable entities. However, the overwhelming vote from the floor was to leave DXCC very much as it is. N7NG started a discussion about the confusion which reigns in some countries about what constitutes a valid licence. Recent problems include Albania (various authorities claimed the right to issue licences), AP/WA2WYR and the Bangladesh situation. K8CH was also asked to comment on Mt.Athos. AA6TT asked why the DXAC has yet to accept Croatia, Serbia, etc as separate countries when they already have diplomatic recognition by the US government.

The contests forum was chaired by N6AA and featured our own G3SXW among other notables. Current issues which fuelled the debate included tape recording of contests for subsequent logging (a couple of the Finnish boys now use multi-track tape recorders which time stamp every QSO and record band data from the rig), setting up of contest skeds with friends and club members beforehand and, of course, the use of PacketCluster. It seems that "ethical" issues like these are the ones taxing contest operators right now. Some would argue that they are in fact technical issues, and no different in principle from the benefits which came from the introduction of SSB, black-box transceivers, or memory keyers.

I missed part of the Antenna Forum, but enjoyed what I heard. The problems which seem to face W6 amateurs where antennas are concerned are ones which most of us would be glad to have. Questions, for example, about the stacking of independently-rotatable 40 and 15 metre beams on the same tower, and the kind of interactions to be expected! Mind you, some problems are less common in the UK. One questioner suggested that Philistran rope was much to be preferred to steel for tower guys. W6OAT responded by saying that the bottom 6ft or so should be steel because otherwise when there is a

grass fire (!) the tower will fall down. With people like W7RM (one of the pioneers of independent rotation) and W6QHS (whose new book on physical design of antenna systems has to be a must) in the audience the quality of discussion was guaranteed to be of the highest standard.

I particularly enjoyed the FO0CI slide show. Clipperton may not be as hairy a destination as South Sandwich, but it has difficulties of its own ranging from the massive crab population, to boobies (a species of bird, for the non-naturalists among you!) ready to defend their patch (and the sum total of their patches is pretty much the whole island), to the danger inherent in landing because of coral just below the surface, to unexploded ammunition left over from the last war. The wind never dropped below about 15mph. And, to cap it all, right at the end of the operation the group were visited by a bunch of French marines, armed to the teeth and highly suspicious. Fortunately Vincent, G0LMX, was able to convince them that the group was harmless (if eccentric) and the marines departed, but only after leaving supplies of French wine! On the plus side, the DXpeditioners never had to prepare a meal - they were all brought ashore from the DXpedition vessel once a suitable gap in the reef had been located. My own favourite anecdote was of the very first FO0CI QSO. With all of 10m to choose from they worked N4QH who turned out to be, probably, the only non-DXer on the band. Where's Clipperton? What's so special about it? Etc!

At the Saturday DX Dinner W3GRF and W3GM (ex-W3BES) were named as the newest entrants to the CQ Magazine Contest Hall of Fame. K1ZZ was given a plaque recognising the contribution of the IARU team at WARC 92. K6TMB was named Northern California DX Club DXer of the Year, and W6NNV was named Southern California DX Club DXer of the Year.

CDXC SPORTSHIRT

Here is another chance to obtain the Chiltern DX Club sportshirt (short sleeve, buttons on neck, with discreet CDXC logo on the left chest.) If you would like one, please send ?11.00 including postage, with the completed order form to Martin Atherton, G3ZAY, 41 Enniskillen Road, Cambridge, CB4 1SQ. Cheques should be made payable to M.J. Atherton.

Name.....

QTH.....

Size.....

NB. S.34", M.36-38", L.38-40", XL > 40"

Colour 1st choice.....2nd choice.....NB. Logo will be dark blue. Shirt colours available include: White, sky blue, red, yellow and jade green.

COMMONWEALTH CONTEST FROM VE7
Bob Whelan, G3PJT

The realisation that I was going to have to be in Vancouver for the 1992 Commonwealth Contest didn't, seem like a good piece of organisation, but as events turned out it was a great weekend. I thought of taking the IC 735 and operating for a few hours if conditions were good. But Dave, G4BUO, suggested that I contact Lee, VE7CC, to see if he knew of a station I could borrow for the weekend and thus make a decent entry. I wrote to Lee and he said not to bother to bring a rig as he was sure he could find a station I could use. He put me in contact with Canadian Telecom and after faxing my licence over I had permission to operate /VE7. Meanwhile I heard that Lee had found a station with a good system, the contest station of VE7SV, Dale, of 3D2AM fame etc. I suggested to Lee that a 15m monoband entry would be the best as I didn't think I would be able to mount an all bands entry. Dale commented that it should be pretty good on 15 as he had a 5 over 5 at 100 + feet and seemed to get out pretty well! After meeting Dale at Vancouver airport, we collected Martha, Dale's wife, and set off for their weekend cabin about 50 miles east.

When we arrived it was already dark and there was only a short time to familiarise myself with the set up. Dale has an IC761 with an Alpha 76. The antennas were 5 over 5s on 20 and 15 on the 140 ft tower with a 4 element fro 10m. On the 80 ft tower there was a 2 element for 40m and a Mosley 6 element. Dipoles for 80m and a sloper for 160m completed the set up!

I programmed up the keyer, had a few contacts, and went to bed. As Dale was going to get up early and work 80m long path he said he would give me a call about 7am. The contest started at 4am local time. In the event I started at 6.40 am local time, about 1440 GMT. On the 5 over 5 I could hear G's on the short path immediately; should have got up earlier.

15 was open to G for at least 10 hours. I worked the last one, G4YOF, at 0020 GMT. Conditions were very good, but having such a good pair of antennas does make the bands seem lively. I felt that VK/ZL activity was poorer this year and Lee, VE7CC, agreed when I had lunch with him later in the week, (more publicity ?). Not many VEs on either, I had expected to work a lot. The antennas certainly helped. I parked the 5 over 5 on G and used the Mosley to look for bonuses, VK/ZL etc. No activity from the Pacific Islands worse luck . But P29PL/CAS was a welcome pair of bonus contacts as my jet lag started to take its toll. I

packed up at 0615 GMT and missed a short early morning long path opening.

I am claiming 2180 points, including 51 bonuses, for my efforts.

Interesting that the G signals were in four distinct signal levels. Level 1 were say S9, and were lead by G4BWP, G3FXB, GB5CC etc. About 2-3 S units down was the next layer (100 watts to a tribander ?). The next level were about another 3 S units down, close to the noise, (100 watts to a dipole/ vertical/G5RV ?). I couldn't hear the fourth level down but I was told on my return that I had a group of Gs who kept calling but couldn't get through. Goodness knows what they were using. 100 watts to a bent wire or the dummy load. I couldn't help noticing that netting is a lost art.

Great fun to wander around the towers and antennas and talk DX with Dale. Dale and the local DXers use the station for the big contests with two identical stations.

So where next year ?

I would like to record my thanks to Dale, VE7SV, to Martha and to Lee, VE7CC, for a great weekend.

Father Moran 9N1MM - Silent Key From TDXB - 24.4.92

Dr Marshall Moran OSJ, better known to amateur community as Father Moran 9N1MM, passed away in New Delhi, India, last week of heart problems. He was 86 years old.

Father Moran's amateur radio career spanned the history of the hobby, from his first crystal radio in 1918, to his daily appearances on 20 metres to within days of his death. Although he never held a US amateur licence, he was active on the bands from Chicago in the 1920s. His amateur career paused for a few years, while he obtained his doctorate in languages from the Jesuit college in St Louis, Missouri. His first missionary post in India put him in contact with World War II pilots, including the Hallicrafters SX28s they used for communications. This rekindled his interest in amateur radio. He was active from India in the late 1940s, where he met Gandhi, and drove Nehru around in a jeep.

In 1951, Father Moran moved to Nepal to establish the St. Xavier School, in an abandoned maharaja's summer palace. He remained there for 40 years. In 1960, he teamed up with some visiting engineers from the US, who were installing telecommunications equipment in Nepal. Along with Sam Maso 9N1SM, Tom Bell 9N1TB, and Fred Vocal

9N1FV, Father Moran asked for, and received, amateur radio licence #1 in Nepal, for 9N1MM. His licence has been renewed every year since then.

Father Moran made almost 300,000 contacts from Nepal, and assisted essentially every visiting ham get on the air. He helped found the SEANET on-the-air meeting, and was the guest speaker at SEANET's first in-person convention. During his triennial trips to the US, father Moran visited dozens of amateur radio clubs, and 'sang for his supper', with his positive and loving portrayal of Nepal, and the Nepalese, especially the young students. Among other distinctions, Father Moran had a regular contact with King Hussein JY1, and he inspired Juan Carlos, King of Spain to get on the air as EA0JC. King Juan Carlos even equipped his royal shack with Drake gear, on 9N1MM's recommendation.

While not on the air, Father Moran ran the St. Xavier school with its 260 students. He held morning sick call, despite his lack of formal medical training, and he worked tirelessly to improve the education and spiritual well-being of two generations of Nepalese.

Rest in Peace, 9N1 Mickey Mouse.

(As many of you will know, Father Moran was on of the few operators to receive the Chiltern DX Club Award of Merit. It was presented to him in 1985 at G3OZF, where CDXC held a gathering in his honour. The news of his passing, I know came as a great shock to many members.)

THE ANNUAL CDXC BAR-BE-QUE

This year's CDXC bar be que will be held at the QTH of Derek G4BLX and Val G4MCD on Sunday 21 June. This is the date of the annual London to Brighton bike ride where some 30,000 cyclists go past their front door. The road is closed but there is special dispensation to let guests through to the house between 1030 and 1100 ish, depending on the level of "traffic" coming up the hill! This is very much a family bar be que and all the children are welcome. Things to bring: Food for the bar be que, drinks for those not driving (Val's home made Pimms is wonderful), drinks for those driving and swimming things. We must state that the pool is not fenced off and parents must be responsible for their own children but the pool is not large and about 4 feet 6 inches deep.

Derek and Val have been running this party for 9 years now as an annual event and would be delighted to welcome CDXC to join in the fun. It is a lot of fun and for non amateur wives/girlfriends there is plenty of entertainment.

For those not sure of the route, talk in can be available on 144.525 (if you are approaching from north of the Downs).

For further details, please contact Derek and Val on 0273 844711.

Many thanks Derek and Val, looking forward to it. Hopefully we will have a larger attendance than the five that turned up last year. CU there.

RSGB INTERNATIONAL HF & IOTA CONVENTION 25-27th SEPTEMBER 1992

Yes it's that time of the year again! Just when you thought it was safe to walk into a bar again...

This year the RSGB International HF & IOTA Convention will be held at the Beaumont Convention Centre, Old Windsor, Berkshire. The Convention Centre is located in a beautiful old English country house overlooking the Thames Valley. It is conveniently situated near motorways M3, M4, M25 and is only 10 miles (16Km) from Heathrow Airports.

Lectures and forums include:

Islands on the Air Award, HF Station design for DXing, LF band antennas and propagation, HF Field Day, Major DXpeditions (possibly including VP8SSI), Cluster forum, Towers etc...

For non-amateurs, Beaumont offers access to many historical sights including Windsor Castle, Runnymede and Hampton Court. Visits will be arranged to these for anyone that would like to go. Also a beautiful stretch of the River Thames is only a short walk away.

Facilities at Beaumont include an indoor swimming pool, squash and tennis courts and a 9 hole pitch and put golf course. In addition Beaumont is set in 50 acres of gardens and park which afford a peaceful environment in the heart of the Thames Valley.

Accommodation

Modern bedrooms complete with ensuite facilities are available at Beaumont.

Bookings: Please contact Roger Balister, G3KMA, La Quinta, Mimbridge, Chobham, Woking, Surrey. Tel 0276 858224.

I think you will agree that the setting is brilliant and located at a very convenient point for those travelling from the North and West along the motorways.

Many foreign visitors are expected, including a number from the former Eastern Bloc countries for whom the routine travel and accommodation expenses may well be insupportable. We will need CDXC volunteers in the South-East to host these visitors and help with tranportation to/from ports and airports. CDXC members in the rest of the country may also wish to offer hospitality before or after the Convention. If you can help, please contact Martin, G3ZAY, asap (Tel: 0223 424714)